



Updates From the Field BEST PRACTICES

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“MOTHER-BABY WATCH” (*Sustansya Para sa Masa*)

Background

The municipality of San Jose del Monte in Bulacan is a 1999 recipient of the LPP-Matching Grant Program. One of the activities implemented under this project is the community-based monitoring and information system (CBMIS). The barangay health workers (BHWs), under the supervision of the rural health midwife, performed family health and nutrition profiling of all the families in their areas of coverage. One problem identified was poor health-seeking behavior and health practices among mothers in the areas of prenatal and postnatal care, family planning, immunization, and growth monitoring for infants and pre-schoolers.

The Intervention

To improve health-seeking behavior and health practices among the target population, the LPP-Matching Grant Program of San Jose del Monte adopted the “Mother-Baby Watch” (MBW) concept under the *Sustansya Para sa Masa* (SPM) banner of the government. The project enrolls high-risk pregnant women who are screened, then monitored regularly throughout the course of their pregnancies. At birth, their babies are likewise enrolled and each pair is followed up until the baby turns 24 months.

The project issues MBW cards to all enrollees to keep track of the services they use. Three types of incentive points are awarded depending on the type of service obtained: *must points*, *extra points*, and *star points*. Mothers earn *must points* when they have a regular prenatal check-up or receive a tetanus toxoid shot. *Extra points* are earned if a mother uses iodized salt and attends a health/nutrition class, while *star points* are awarded to fully immunized mothers, mothers who breastfeed up to six months, and those whose babies are fully immunized at 9 months of age. For babies, *must points* are earned when monthly weights are plotted on the growth monitoring chart and for timely introduction of complementary food. *Extra points* are given when the growth chart is kept and the trend of the growth curve is upward, while *star points* are awarded when the baby sustains a 12-month period with an upward growth curve.

It is estimated that a mother-child pair can earn a total of 25 points in a month.



Each point is equal to one peso (US\$0.02), and attending health personnel grant a coupon to the mother for every 25 points earned. The mothers redeem the coupons at designated redemption centers, where they can get fortified food, iodized salt, and weaning/complementary food in exchange for the coupons. Certificates of completion of vaccination are likewise awarded to fully immunized mothers and fully immunized children.

SPM benefactors were organized and mobilized to help provide incentives for MBW enrollees. Each SPM benefactor may opt to support several mother-baby pairs. Among themselves, SPM benefactors organized a movement to help health center personnel manage the program. Various committees were



MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM
Department of Health

formed, for example, the Committee on Ways and Means for resource generation, Review and Screening for enrolling beneficiaries, and Incentives and Rewards for ensuring the availability of supplies at redemption centers.

and issued Mother-Baby Watch cards. About 50 SPM benefactors have already signed their pledges of commitment to support one to four mother-baby pairs for approximately 33 months (that is, 25 pesos per month per mother-child pair). The main health center of San

noodles, margarine, orange juice, sardines, and iodized salt. “Baby packs” containing a selection of fortified noodles, cereals, juice, eggs, and iodized salt are also available. About 100 more benefactors are expected to attend the succeeding SPM Bene-

How the Program Works

Guidelines for Implementing Mother-Baby Watch

Activity	Strategy/Method	Requirements
1. Identify target pregnant women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare list of all pregnant women in the barangay based on Matching Grant Program Family Profile survey of BHWs/Barangay Nutrition Scholars • Prioritize list based on set criteria • Secure endorsement of candidates from barangay officials or SPM review committee at the barangay level • Review endorsed candidates at municipal level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MGP Family Profile • Criteria for selection • SPM Review Committee at barangay level • SPM Review Committee at Main Health Center (MHC) level
2. Issue MBW-SPM card	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize meeting of selected candidates • Rural Health Midwife (RHM) or Rural Health Physician (RHP) will explain the MBW objectives and mechanics • Issue MBW-SPM card duly accomplished and signed • Maintain a masterlist of enrolled pregnant women per barangay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RHM sends invitation to candidates; RHP prepares agenda for meeting • Speakers invited and materials prepared • MBW-SPM card duly accomplished • Masterlist form
3. Identification/Selection of MBW-SPM Benefactors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a list of probable SPM benefactors per barangay and municipality/city • Organize and conduct benefactors' meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RHM sends invitation to candidates; RHP prepares agenda for meeting • Speakers invited and materials prepared • MBW-SPM card duly accomplished • Masterlist form
4. Organize SPM Movement (Review Committee at Barangay/Municipal level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present concept, structure, and functions during SPM benefactors' meeting • Conduct election of officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of recommended SPM benefactors per barangay • Send out letters of invitation to prospective benefactors; prepare program/agenda, pledge of commitment form • Create final list of SPM benefactors • Set guidelines for redemption
5. Identify/select redemption centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with stores/groceries • Set guidelines for redemption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for redemption
6. Implement/monitor MBW-SPM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide services at all Barangay Health Stations/MHCs • Issue points/issue redemption coupons 	
7. Disseminate experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document and disseminate experiences 	

Results

To date, 86 pregnant mothers from 14 barangays of the Rural Health Unit II of San Jose del Monte have been properly screened by the SPM Review Committee, enrolled in the project,

Jose del Monte in Tungkong Mangga has initially been designated as a redemption center where beneficiaries can exchange coupons for food items. For pregnant and postpartum mothers, “mother packs” have been prepared containing an assortment of fortified

factors Meeting and register as members of the SPM Movement.

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